

## Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EA/K:RGRICH:LKD  
APPROVED BY EA - MR. HOLBROOKE  
EA - MR. SULLIVAN  
EA/K - MR. RICH  
S/S-O - L. FLEISCHER

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TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL FLASH

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 186931

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, KS, US

SUBJECT: PROPOSED VISIT OF CONGRESSMEN HAMILTON AND SPENCE

REFS: (A) SEOUL 6427; (B) STATE 185971

SUMMARY. FOLLOWING CONSIDERATION OF ROKG RESPONSE (REF A)  
TO EARLIER REQUEST SPEAKER O'NEILL TODAY ASKED THAT THE  
AMBASSADOR PERSONALLY CONVEY TO PRESIDENT PARK THE  
IMPORTANCE OF HIS RECEIVING CONGRESSMEN HAMILTON AND  
SPENCE AS DIRECT EMISSARIES OF THE SPEAKER. DEPARTMENT  
FULLY ENDORSES THIS REQUEST. AMBASSADOR SHOULD SEEK  
EARLY APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT IN ORDER PERSONALLY TO  
DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM WITH HIM AND URGE THAT HAMILTON AND  
SPENCE BE RECEIVED BY HIM AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE MOMENT.  
END SUMMARY.  
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1. O'NEILL CALLED MEETING IN HIS OFFICE TODAY WHICH  
INCLUDED MINORITY LEADER RHODES, CONGRESSMEN HAMILTON  
AND SPENCE, DEPUTY SPECIAL COUNSEL PETER WHITE AND  
DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER, ROGER SULLIVAN AND BOB  
RICH. CONGRESSMEN WERE DISPLEASED WITH KOREAN RESPONSE  
AND THERE WAS SOME SENTIMENT TO END THE ENTIRE EPISODE

AT THIS TIME WITH A DENUNCIATION OF ROKG'S LACK OF COOPERATION. SPEAKER NOTED THAT THE PRESTIGE OF THE CONGRESS WOULD BE FURTHER DAMAGED IF ITS EMISSARIES WERE REBUFFED. GROUP WAS ALSO INFORMED BY PETER WHITE OF PRESS LEAK (REF B) WHICH PRACTICALLY GUARANTEES THAT THERE WILL BE WASHINGTON PRESS STORY OF THE SPEAKER'S INITIATIVE BY JULY 25.

2. SPEAKER THEN ASKED THAT THE AMBASSADOR PERSONALLY CONVEY HIS REQUEST TO PRESIDENT PARK AND URGE THE LATTER TO RECEIVE HAMILTON AND SPENCE.

3. YOU SHOULD SEEK URGENT APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT PARK TO PRESS THIS MATTER IN MOST PERSUASIVE MANNER. WE REALIZE THAT PRESIDENT MAY HAVE BEGUN HIS CHINHAЕ VACATION, AND THAT THIS MAY BE DIFFICULT IN VIEW OF PRECEDENT THAT HE DOES NOT RECEIVE VISITORS IN CHINHAЕ. ROK EMBASSY HERE IS UNCERTAIN WHETHER VACATION IS FOR ONE WEEK OR LONGER. PLEASE ADVISE IMMEDIATELY HOW LONG PARK WILL BE OUT OF CAPITAL AND PROSPECTS FOR SEEING HIM IN THE INTERIM.

4. IN TAKING THIS ISSUE UP DIRECTLY WITH THE PRESIDENT, YOU SHOULD STRESS THAT SECRETARY STRONGLY URGES THAT HE MEET THIS REQUEST OF CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP. POINT OUT THAT THERE IS A VERY STRONG DESIRE IN THE CONGRESS

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TO BE ABLE TO END THIS PROBLEM AND TOGETHER WITH THE ROKG TO PUT IT BEHIND US IN A COOPERATIVE MANNER.

5. THIS SUBJECT WAS DISCUSSED AT LENGTH WITH ROK EMBASSY COUNSELOR PARK KUN-WOO JULY 24 AND WE URGED EVERY EFFORT BE MADE TO GAIN ACCEPTANCE FOR CONGRESSIONAL VISIT TO SEOUL. PARK WILL FLY TO SAN DIEGO EARLY JULY 25 TO JOIN AMB KIM YONG-SHIK AND ROK VICE FONMIN CH'OE AT THE SCM MEETING. HE BELIEVES THIS WILL BE AN IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY TO SELL CH'OE ON THE NEED TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THE SPEAKER'S REQUEST.

6. ACCORDING TO COUNSELOR PARK (WHO HAS JUST RETURNED FROM SEOUL), THERE IS BROAD SKEPTICISM WITHIN ROKG OF REAL INTENTIONS OF CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP. FOR THIS REASON BELIEVE IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO EMPHASIZE THE SECRETARY'S OWN ENDORSEMENT OF YOUR REPRESENTATIONS AND OUR EVALUATION THAT THIS IS MOST FACE SAVING WAY SATISFACTORILY TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM. BELIEVE WE CAN ASSURE THERE WILL BE NO SURPRISES. CONGRESSMEN WILL NOT SEEK TO EMBARRASS PRESIDENT PARK OR PRESENT HIM "EVIDENCE" WHICH HE MUST ANSWER. THEY

WILL WISH TO PRESENT FULLY AND PERSONALLY THE DIMENSIONS OF THE POLITICAL PROBLEM FOR THE CONGRESS AND SEEK HIS ASSISTANCE IN FINDING A SOLUTION.

7. PUBLICITY IS GOING TO BE IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID IN ANY CASE. PRESS LEAKS OF CONGRESSIONAL INITIATIVE WILL ENSURE THAT. IF THE SPEAKER'S OFFER IS AGAIN REBUFFED, THE OUTCOME HERE WILL INEVITABLY BE ONE OF RECRIMINATION AND DENUNCIATION OF THE ROKG WHICH WILL LEAVE A CONTINUING IMPACT ON THE THINKING OF KEY CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS WHO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN TRYING TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE. FOR THE MANY MORE JUNIOR CONGRESSMEN WHO ARE NOT WELL VERSED IN THE HISTORICAL AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONSHIPS INVOLVED KOREA WILL HENCEFORTH BE ASSOCIATED WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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THE UNSATISFACTORY OUTCOME OF THE SCANDAL.

8. WHILE WE REGRET THE NECESSITY FOR YOU TO HAVE TO PRESS THE PRESIDENT ON SUCH A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE AT THE VERY BEGINNING OF YOUR RELATIONSHIPS IN SEOUL, YOU SHOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO CONVINCE PARK THAT THE SPEAKER'S REQUEST IS NOT ONLY CONSTRUCTIVE BUT THAT ONE WAY OR ANOTHER THIS PROBLEM WILL SOON BE ENDED. THE CHOICE NOW IS WHETHER TO TRY TO END THIS LONG CONTENTIOUS EPISODE THROUGH A FINAL SHOW OF HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS, OR WHETHER IT WILL END IN RECRIMINATIONS WHICH WILL LONG POISON CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS TOWARD KOREA AND INEVITABLY INJURE BOTH ROK AND USG INTERESTS FOR AN INDETERMINATE TIME TO COME. AS YOU REALIZE, MANY OTHER MATTERS, INCLUDING OUR HOPE THAT 1978 WILL SEE A RESTORING OF A SOLID BASE FOR OUR RELATIONSHIP, ARE AT RISK NOW.

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